DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 407 723 EA 028 351

TITLE	Team Handbook.
INSTITUTION	Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Jan 97
NOTE	88p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Collegiality; *Cooperative Planning; Group Dynamics; Interprofessional Relationship; Organizational Communication; Organizational Development; *Participative Decision Making; Problem Solving; Public Agencies; *Team Training; *Teamwork

ABSTRACT

Experience shows that teamwork produces powerful results. Working in a team environment, however, presents its own set of challenges. This handbook provides U.S. Department of Education managers and employees with guidance to develop high-performing teams. Based on input from agency employees throughout the country, the handbook was designed to help answer the most frequently asked questions, offer possible solutions to common challenges, and provide user-friendly planning checklists. The introductory section differentiates teams from work groups, describes the benefits and challenges, delineates the appropriate and inappropriate uses of teams, and describes the various types of teams and roles within them. The next three sections offer suggestions for preparing, implementing, and sustaining teamwork. Recommended readings and references are offered at the end of each section. An appendix contains a supervisory position addendum. (Contains 39 references.) (LMI)

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TEAM Handbook

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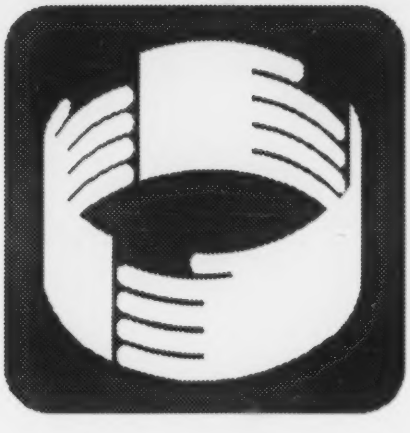
TEAM Handbook



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

January 7, 1997

MEMORANDUM TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES

The Department of Education has been changing the way it conducts business. We developed a strategic plan with challenging goals to achieve our mission of ensuring equal access to education and promoting educational excellence. To accomplish these goals, we committed ourselves to making the Department a high-performance organization that is able to meet the evolving needs of the American people.

An important part of this effort has been the emphasis on teamwork and the move to a team-based structure. By reducing organizational layers, eliminating excess rules, and organizing employees into teams, the Department is unleashing the energy and creativity of employees and broadening their experiences. In a short period of time, teams of employees have made tremendous achievements in improving the way the Department operates and serves its customers. Through teamwork, employees have also launched important initiatives that will improve our nation's education system and expand educational opportunities for all Americans.

Experience shows us that teamwork produces powerful results. At the same time, however, working in a team environment presents its own set of challenges. This handbook provides Department managers and employees with guidance to successfully meet those challenges and develop high-performing teams. I encourage managers to consult this handbook when deciding whether to establish a team and to use it as guidance to effectively oversee and develop teams. Employees will find the handbook to be a useful tool for understanding the different types of teams as well as team development and dynamics.

I believe the continued use of teamwork will accelerate Department efforts to meet our strategic goals. Therefore, I encourage you to use this handbook to ensure that Department teams are high performing and are thereby able to provide learners of all ages the best services possible.

Dick Riley

Richard W. Riley

600 INDEPENDENCE AVE., S.W. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202-0100

Our mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the Nation.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

TEAM Handbook

Office of Management

January 1997

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Introduction to Teams

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- What Is a Team?
- The Benefits and Challenges of Implementing Teams
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The Team Choice at the Department of Education

Throughout government and industry, highly flexible teams are breaking down barriers and providing innovative solutions to enhance quality and service to customers. In an agency-wide survey, Department of Education employees confirmed that teamwork, appropriately used, enabled them to increase productivity, solve complex problems, eliminate duplication and speed response time to customers. These outcomes are critical to the agency's ability to prosper and achieve its strategic goal of becoming a high performing organization in today's demanding and rapidly changing world.

While the benefits of teams are real, so are the challenges. The Department of Education *Team Handbook* is designed to address both the risks and rewards of the teaming process. Based on input from agency employees throughout the country, it is organized to help answer the most frequently asked questions, offer possible solutions to commonly experienced challenges and provide user-friendly planning checklists. The *Team Handbook* can be used as a guide or a quick reference source for principal offices, supervisors, managers, team leaders, team members and employees making the team choice at the Department of Education.

What Is a Team?

The word "team" tends to have different meanings for different people. Some call any group that works together a team. Others apply it to situations where group members "get along well". While a team always contains a group of workers, not all work groups are teams. Simply labeling a group a team does not make it one. While there are many variations, one model of a true team highlights several distinctive qualities:

What is a team?

A team is a multi-skilled group of willing people, united around a common goal, who work well together and are empowered to produce quality results.

➢**Team members are united around a common goal.**
For team members, individual initiatives are secondary to the accomplishment of the team's purpose and goal. This is the strongest, most distinguishing characteristic of a team.

➢**Team members are multi-skilled.**
Successful team members continuously develop their technical, interpersonal and team process skills. Over time they broaden their expertise by learning from other members, either through their work interaction or planned cross training.

➢**Team members are willing participants.**
Commitment to the team and its goals is evident among team members. Each individual is willing to do all that he or she reasonably can to help the team succeed.

➢**Team members work well together.**
Team members trust and respect one another. They communicate openly, collaborate effectively and resolve conflicts. All team members agree on and contribute to the team's processes (decision making, problem solving, meeting procedures, etc.)

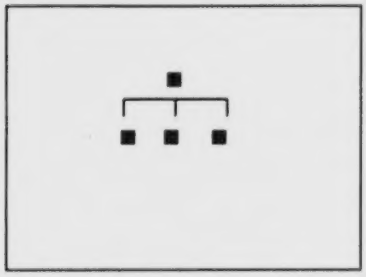
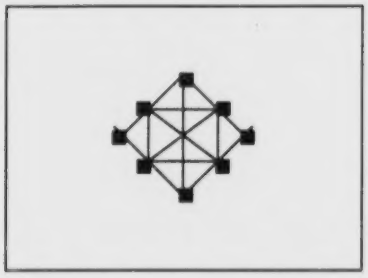
➢**Team members are empowered.**
As teams develop, they assume greater and greater responsibility and decision making authority. Team members feel jointly responsible for their results and have a sense of control over how they accomplish goals.

➢**Teams produce quality results.**
The most important measure of a team is the quality of its output. Strong teams consistently produce higher quality results than any individual effort could.

How Is a Team Different From a Work Group?

A work group can be defined as, "a group that interacts primarily to share information and to make decisions to help each member perform within his or her area of responsibility." Work groups typically have no need to engage in collective work that requires joint effort. Within the work group, the focus is on individual efforts and activities rather than on what can be accomplished by the group as a whole. The following chart distinguishes a team from a work group:

WORK GROUP VERSUS TEAM

WORK GROUP		TEAM
		
Leader directed	**Leadership**	Shared leadership
Chain of command	**Structure**	Decentralized decision making
Individual goals	**Performance Goals**	Common goals
Individual	**Responsibility & Accountability**	Mutual (primary) Individual (secondary)
Matched to individual job	**Skills & Competencies**	Complementary, multi-skilled
Shared information	**Communication**	Collaborative
Individual	**Rewards**	Shared

The Benefits and Challenges of Implementing Teams

A team is a means to an end, a strategy for achieving organizational goals. It should not be viewed as an end in and of itself. When considering teams, it is important to be aware of both benefits and possible challenges of a team strategy.

The Benefits of Teams

The team approach is a distinctive style of working that engages the collective talent, commitment and energy of individuals. The ideal team can achieve more collectively than any one individual could on his or her own. Consider the following potential benefits of a team approach:

➢**Productivity**
- Provides greater commitment of team members to achieve goals, deliver results
- Enhances performance on tasks too large or complex for individuals
- Insures that results are linked to organizational initiatives

➢**Quality Improvement**
- Improves outputs, ideas and procedures
- Creates a stronger focus on continued improvement

➢**Customer Satisfaction**
- Increases responsiveness to the customer
- Offers "one face" to the customer
- Insures consistency of service
- Improves internal and external relationships

➢**Innovation**
- Enhances creativity
- Improves the ability to address cross functional issues

➢**Problem solving ability**
- Enhances the ability to solve more complex problems
- Engages multiple perspectives, skills and experiences
- Creates higher quality decisions
- Improves the speed of problem identification
- Provides greater application of collective knowledge

The Benefits of Teams

➢**Communication**
- Improves information flow across organizational boundaries
- Creates more sharing of information
- Increases collaboration
- Reduces conflicts on key issues and builds stronger consensus

➢**Efficiency**
- Improves efficiencies by team members closer to the customer or problem
- Provides efficient use of available resources
- Reduces costs
- Streamlines operations

➢**Morale**
- Increases sense of belonging
- Improves employee's satisfaction of contributing to "something larger than myself"
- Creates more meaningful work
- Strengthens commitment

➢**Flexibility**
- Increases responsiveness to changes
- Fosters new behaviors

➢**Individual growth**
- Insures exposure to other perspectives
- Provides more opportunities for cross training
- Broadens skills/enhances assignments
- Creates learning organization

➢**Empowerment**
- Increases participation of all employees
- Decentralizes decision making authority as appropriate

The Challenges of Implementing Teams

Teams need time, attention, vision and support to overcome obstacles and succeed. There are a number of issues that may challenge a team's ability to achieve results:

➢**Organizational pitfalls to avoid:**

- **Unclear vision and purpose.** Teams are formed without a compelling purpose.
- **Inappropriate management style for teams.** Managers and supervisors may not change their behavior to support team processes.
- **Inadequate time and support.** Teams may not be provided with adequate time, training, feedback or tools to support their development.
- **Conflicting systems.** Traditional systems may not support the team efforts.

➢**Team process failings to avoid:**

- **Poor team planning.** The team has not developed clear goals, objectives and action plans. Confusion exists concerning who does what.
- **Reluctance to share information.** Individuals may hoard information and feel threatened by a collaborative approach.
- **Inappropriate decision making and problem solving.** Team members may lack skills or be unwilling to trust team decisions.
- **Poor conflict management.** Team members may allow conflict to escalate and obstruct team progress.
- **Changing membership.** The team may not be prepared to deal effectively with gaining or losing members.

The Challenges of Implementing Teams

➢**Individual shortcomings to watch for:**

- **Fear of loss of control.** Individuals may be concerned with a loss of power or control in the new structure and focus first on what they will have to give up.

- **Fear of loss of identity.** Individuals who have worked to establish their expertise may fear a loss of identity, status or competence as a team member.

- **Diverse responses to change.** Some personalities are naturally more responsive or resistant to change than others. Teams often progress at the pace of their most resistant members.

- **Unwillingness to take risks.** Some individuals are resistant to move "outside their comfort zone."

- **Complacency.** Some individuals may be unwilling to exert the effort required to successfully change.

(For additional information see: "Preparing for Teams," page 22, and "Implementing Teams," page 38.)

Shifting from a Traditional to a Team-Empowered Workplace

The Department of Education is evolving from a traditional, management-controlled philosophy to a team-empowered mode of operation. This shift requires changes in the thinking, skills and behavior of all involved. The following chart illustrates some of the major shifts:

Traditional/Hierarchical	Team-Empowered
➢ Isolated specialists	➢ Cross-trained, multi-skilled professionals
➢ Policy/procedure-based	➢ Values/vision-based
➢ Compliance oriented	➢ Customer oriented
➢ Slow to change	➢ Continuous improvement
➢ Management driven	➢ Customer driven
➢ Centralized responsibility and authority	➢ Decentralized responsibility and authority
➢ Conflict avoided	➢ Conflict expected, managed and resolved
➢ Managers set goals/make all decisions	➢ As teams mature, manager delegates goal-setting and decisionmaking to teams

When Are Teams Appropriate?

There are many functions and programs where excellent quality and productivity can be achieved through the implementation of a team approach. There are also areas that would not realize a significant benefit by transforming to teams. Since teams are not appropriate for every work situation, it is important to carefully weigh the decision to transform to a team environment. Below is a checklist to help determine when and if teams are appropriate:

Use teams when	Don't use teams when
❒ There is a clear, common goal.	❒ Common goals within the group cannot be identified.
❒ A variety of skills and expertise is required and tasks can be worked on simultaneously.	❒ The workload is better handled individually.
❒ Multiple perspectives will result in better decisions and solutions.	❒ Decisions are better made by one person.
❒ There is enough time for input from all involved.	❒ Immediate results are needed or time is limited.
❒ The organization is willing to support teams.	❒ Management does not support the team process.
❒ There is willingness to use team output.	❒ A decision on the outcome has already been made.

Before making any decisions to move to a team environment, contact colleagues in other offices that have established teams to discuss the benefits, lessons learned and their experiences on when teams are appropriate. (For more information see: "Recommended Reading, References and Resources, Peer Coaching," page 13.)

The Human Resources Group and the Training and Development Group stand ready to assist at any time with information on personnel issues and training opportunities for teams.

The following examples illustrate some appropriate and inappropriate uses of teams:

➢**Appropriate uses of teams:**

☑ **Motorola.** The success of Motorola's Iridium Project demonstrates how effective a cross-functional team can be in developing and coordinating complex projects. As reported in *Industry Week*, Motorola was charged with developing a huge network containing 66 satellites. "We realized at the beginning that there was no way we could manage a project of this size and complexity in the traditional way," commented the project's general manager. The project not only crosses functional boundaries but organizational and geographical boundaries as well. Corporate partners including McDonnell Douglas, Martin Marietta and COM DEV (a Canadian corporation) provide a much needed global perspective. Independently, there wasn't a company that had all the expertise and capabilities needed to launch the network. Success depended on a new model for global team efforts.

☑ **Social Security Administration**. The Social Security Administration's Atlanta field office used a team approach to significantly cut processing time and save taxpayer dollars. The Atlanta office created a reinvention team to help them handle an increasing volume of disability benefit claims. The team quickly realized that if they asked customers to bring medical records when filing claims, employees would not have to waste time locating client records. The team's idea saved 60 days on the average claim and over $351,000 of taxpayer's money.

➢**Inappropriate uses of teams:**

- A team was formed in name only. While participants had new position names (i.e. team leader, members, etc.) their roles, responsibilities and levels of authority did not change.

- A critical business decision needed to be made within 48 hours. The organization attempted to pull a team together to make the decision. However, the team was unable to organize sufficiently to accomplish the task within the quick turnaround time.

- One organization opted to use a team to decide on a new color of wallpaper for the facility. Eight people dedicated time and energy to the project at the expense of more critical issues.

In teams, "the whole is greater than the sum of the parts." Form teams only when team output will ultimately exceed individual efforts. (For more information see: 'Transforming Work Units into Teams," page 23.)

Types of Teams

If teams are determined to be appropriate, it is then important to consider the type of team that will best accomplish the mission. There are many different types of teams, and they are defined by a number of different factors:

- **TIME** - The time investment required by team members and/or life span of the team.
- **FUNCTION** - The area of the organization that team members represent.
- **LEVELS OF EMPOWERMENT** - The team's level of autonomy and decision making authority.

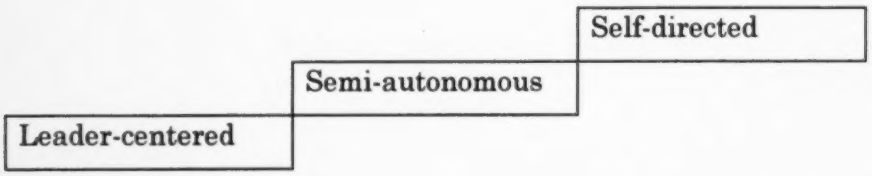
➢**TIME**

Permanent work teams	↔	***Ad hoc* teams**
Permanent work teams are composed of a group of permanently assigned individuals who use their collective skills to achieve a common purpose. Team members' responsibilities represent 100 percent of their job duties.		*Ad Hoc* teams are composed of a group of temporarily assigned people who are brought together to achieve a short-term goal or purpose. Team responsibilities represent only a portion of team member's overall job duties or they may represent full time work for a limited period. (Ad hoc: *formed for a special purpose.*)

➢**FUNCTION**

Functional teams	↔	**Cross-functional teams**
Functional work teams are composed of team members who represent only one major area of the organization and whose collective expertise is focused toward a common goal. Functional work teams can be permanent or *ad hoc.*		Cross-functional teams (a*lso called multidisciplinary*) contain team members who represent different work areas or functions of the organization. Members bring varied expertise to help the team achieve a common purpose. Cross-functional teams can be permanent or *ad hoc.*

➢LEVELS OF EMPOWERMENT



As teams mature, they may gain increasing authority over their own actions. There is a *gradual* transfer of accountability and decision-making authority from managers to teams. Even self-directed teams, however, operate within clear boundaries.

It is not possible for every team to strive for the highest level of empowerment and authority. Leader-centered or semi-autonomous teams may be a better fit with the organization's culture and management. It is also unrealistic to expect a new team to immediately become self-directed. Depending upon the complexity of the mission, it may take several years to successfully achieve the appropriate level of empowerment.

TYPES OF TEAMS BASED ON LEVELS OF EMPOWERMENT. Any one of the following teams can be permanent or *ad hoc*, functional or cross functional. The characteristic that differentiates them is their level of empowerment. Levels of empowerment vary along a spectrum from leader-centered to self-directed as follows:

Self-directed teams
In a self-directed team, team members assume full responsibility for the accomplishment of their mission and goals. They perform most management functions such as team staffing, peer reviews, distributing work, training and development. They are, however, accountable to a team sponsor or manager and must work within clear boundaries. Team members usually select their own team leader from among the members of the work team. The team leader assumes a facilitator role to support team collaboration.

Semi-autonomous teams
Semi-autonomous team members are more actively involved in the ongoing and administrative responsibilities of the team. For example, team members may contribute to decisions concerning work distribution, scheduling and cross-training. The team leader role is more participative than that of leader-centered teams.

Leader-centered teams
The team leader plays a central role in this type of team. He/she transfers some significant authority and decision-making roles to members of the team but also retains some or all supervisory responsibilities. The authority is usually delegated according to technical expertise and is work-related as opposed to administrative.

(For more information on supervisory functions see: "Personnel Issues," page 68.)

Examples:

All three factors: time, function and level of empowerment can be used to describe a team. For example:

> **Inside the Department of Education.**
>
> Look for this symbol (☞) throughout the handbook for additional examples, best practices and lessons learned inside the Department of Education.

☞The RCC Chartered Awards and Incentives Team was established to develop options for a new departmental awards and incentives program. This team could be described as:

- ***Ad hoc*** - The team existed for the duration of the project only (approximately one year). Participation on the team represented only a portion of the member's overall job responsibilities, assuming about 25 percent of the team member's time.
- **Cross-functional** - The team consisted of 11 members from various departmental offices.
- **Self-directed** - All members shared equally in the team's responsibilities and stepped into and out of lead roles depending on the particular stage of the project and the presence or absence of other members. A facilitator helped support the team's efforts.

☞The Labor Relations Group consists of six individuals who work collaboratively to provide guidance to promote and support labor management partnerships throughout the agency. The team can be described as:

- **Permanent** - Members are permanently assigned to the team and perform their primary job responsibilities as team members.
- **Functional** - All members are in the same functional area of the organization.
- **Leader-centered** - The team has a supervisory team leader.

Examples:

☞OESE has created 10 regional service teams which serve as a single point of contact for information and technical assistance on OESE programs. The regional service teams are responsible for grant administration, technical assistance, waiver requests, integrated program monitoring and other services to OESE customers. A regional service team can be described as:

- **Permanent** - Members are permanently assigned to the team.
- **Cross-functional** - Members of the team represent each of the seven OESE program offices including Goals 2000, Impact Aid, Safe and Drug Free Schools, etc.
- **Semi-autonomous → Self-directed** - The team leader is non-supervisory, and teams are moving toward the goal of being self-directed.

☞The Team Handbook Design Team was formed to help identify team-based design and implementation issues and develop guidance in the form of a handbook. The team could be described as:

- ***Ad hoc*** - The team existed for the duration of the project only. Participation on the team represented only a portion of the member's overall job responsibilities.
- **Cross-functional** - Members represented a number of different areas of the agency including the Training and Development Center, Human Resources Group, Labor Relations Group and the Union.
- **Self-directed** - The team leader was non-supervisory. Although the team was accountable to a sponsor, full responsibility for the accomplishment of the mission rested with the members of the team.

Team Roles

In order for a team to function well, everyone involved must know what is expected of them. This overview describes three major roles: sponsor, team leader and team member. Each is critical to the success of the team.

➢**Sponsor.** The team sponsor is the key leader(s) responsible for clarifying the outcomes of the team and supporting its development. Although sponsors are not regarded as part of the team, they help the team to develop successfully by:

Providing leadership

- Relaying the vision and compelling purpose for the team
- Providing continuous information necessary for the team to set and achieve meaningful goals and objectives
- Seeking and providing feedback on team performance
- Providing clarity on outcomes and boundaries

Removing barriers

- Ensuring the team has adequate resources (information, time, training, facilities, equipment, people, etc.) to function effectively

Coaching

- Serving as a resource (ideas, information, encouragement) to enable the team to solve its own problems

The sponsor usually needs to play an active role with the team in its early stages, but should be willing to pull back as the team matures. (For more information see "Preparing for Teams: The Sponsor's Role," page 25.)

➢**Team Leader.** Team leaders guide the day-to-day activity of the team. Just as there are different types of teams, there are different types of team leaders. Newly formed teams generally require a strong team leader to provide guidance and direction. As the team develops and is capable of higher levels of empowerment, the team leader role becomes more of a facilitator. Mature permanent teams, as well as some *ad hoc* teams, may rotate the team leader role or members may provide joint leadership. In all cases, the team leader is also a team member and should share in team member responsibilities.

The team leader is generally responsible for:

- Keeping the team focused on agreed-upon goals and objectives
- Helping the team decide on the process to be used to achieve the goals
- Conducting effective team meetings
- Coordinating and communicating team plans with other parts of the organization
- Modeling the principles chosen by the team for effective team behavior
- Coaching to assist team members in the development of team process skills

(For more information see: "Team Leadership," page 59, and "Personnel Issues," page 66.)

➢**Team Member.** Individual team members are the key to team success. In order to become a high-performance team, each team member must participate fully by:

- Preparing for, attending and contributing to team meetings
- Assuming responsibility for individual and team goals
- Learning and using team process skills
- Pitching in, above and beyond when necessary, to help the team achieve its goals and objectives

(For more information see: "How Employees Can Prepare for Teams," page 35.)

Recommended Reading, References and Resources

RECOMMENDED READING:

The Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High-Performance Organization is perhaps the most well-known and influential book on teams. (Harvard Business School Press, 1993). John Katzenbach and Douglas Smith provide numerous examples to illustrate the characteristics, development and rewards of a team approach.

Another good resource is Harvey Robbins and Michael Finley's *Why Teams Don't Work: What Goes Wrong and How to Make it Right.* (Pacesetter Books, 1995). Their book provides a no-nonsense approach to the problems that arise frequently in teams as well as when not to use teams.

A good book for understanding teams is Kimbal Fisher's *Leading Self-Directed Work Teams.* (McGraw-Hill, 1993). Fisher provides clarity on the team leader role with real world examples and tips to help organizations transform to a team-based environment. In addition, at the end of the book there is an excellent Team Leader Survival Guide that anyone (not just team leaders) will find useful.

Andrew DuBrin's *The Breakthrough Team Player* (AMACOM) is addressed to team members. It covers team roles, and how members can build their effectiveness and skills while participating in teams.

PEER COACHING:

Principal Offices and divisions transforming to teams include:

OBEMLA	OCR	OESE
OSERS	OIG	OPE/DCS
OM	OVAE/DVTE	

INDIVIDUAL INTERNAL RESOURCES:

For additional information feel free to contact the following individuals who are available to share their teaming experiences:

Mary Ann Johnson, OPE
Terri Liles, OPE
Robert Theobald, OCFO

Preparing for Teams

- **Transforming Work Units into Teams**
- **Forming an *Ad Hoc* Team**
- **How Employees Can Prepare for Teams**

Transforming Work Units into Teams

Many organizations have transformed entire work units into a team structure in order to improve productivity, break down communication barriers, increase organizational flexibility and enhance customer service. Shifting an entire work unit to a teaming structure is, however, an ambitious and complex effort that should be approached ***one stage at a time***.

Team Sponsor:

Team sponsors are the key leaders ultimately responsible for clarifying the outcomes and boundaries of the team and supporting its development.

There are a number of key issues that the sponsor should carefully consider **before** announcing the decision to transform into teams:

- What is the purpose of the team structure?
- How can the workforce be involved in the transition decision?
- What will the roles and responsibilities be in the new structure?
- What boundaries and levels of authority will teams have?
- How will team members and leaders be selected?
- How willing is the sponsor to change his or her management style to fit a team environment?

The sponsor's clarity on these issues will help reduce employees' anxiety as the change is announced and implemented.

Thorough research before the implementation of teams is key to success. Sponsors should contact colleagues in other offices that have established teams to discuss the benefits and lessons learned. (For more information see: "Recommended Reading, References and Resources, Peer Coaching" page 37).

Also contact the Human Resource Group about personnel issues and the Training and Development Center about training opportunities for teams. Consulting with others with team experience can help sponsors avoid possible unconsidered pitfalls that may disrupt the team structuring process.

In addition, the sponsor should consider the following factors that have been found to be critical for a successful transition to teams:

- Strong, visible sponsorship
- A clear, compelling vision and purpose for the change
- Willingness to gradually transfer decision making authority to teams
- Alignment of human resource systems with team efforts
- Role changes for everyone, not just team members
- Investment of time, training, guidance and technical support
- Long-term commitment
- Open, honest communication to all involved

> ☞ *"The implementation of teams in OBEMLA has helped eliminate fragmentation and improve communication both within our POC as well as with other POCs. Although teams can be demanding on time there are some very clear benefits. I don't think anyone would disagree that the teams have helped to break down some old (and ineffective) walls."*
>
> John Ovard, OBEMLA

The Sponsor's Role: Demonstrating Commitment

The long term, visible commitment of leadership is often considered the most critical team success factor.

Commitment can be demonstrated by:

➢ **Communicating the vision and the compelling need to change.** Major change requires more frequent communication. Brown bag sessions, town meetings, focus groups, awareness training and informal dialogue sessions all offer opportunities to answer the question, "Why change?" and to listen to employee concerns.

> "If there is a single rule of communications for leaders, it is this: when you are so sick of talking about something that you can hardly stand it, your message is finally starting to get through."
> *Harvard Business Review*

Suggested dialogue questions:

- Why change?
- What needs to be different (critical outcomes)?
- What are the forces supporting the change?
- What are the obstacles?

➢ **Creating partnerships with key stakeholders including the union.** Develop alliances with people and groups who could have a major impact on your team's success (i.e. senior executives, managers, union representatives, employees.) A steering team can help define the vision and critical outcomes and provide visible leadership during the change. Design teams can later address strategies for implementation. By involving key stakeholders in this process, a sense of participation and ownership will be created.

> ☞ *"Region IX OCR has used a labor-management team approach to develop performance agreement (GPAS) standards. A GPAS team was formed consisting of both management and bargaining unit staff. The team had clear goals and time frames and spent considerable time to develop a real partnership agreement."*
>
> Stella Klugman, OCR

➢**Demonstrating a change in behavior–"walking the talk."** A successful shift to teams requires a change in behavior of everyone involved, beginning with the leadership. Sponsors must demonstrate the willingness and ability to gradually transfer authority and decision-making to the team. (For additional information see: "Team Roles," page 19.)

➢**Acknowledging the emotions and anxiety involved in the change process.** Leaders should put themselves in their employees' shoes to understand how change looks from that perspective. Managing the change means managing the communication between people leading the change effort and those who are expected to implement the new strategies. Keep the dialogue open to address both the strategies and emotions of the change process.

➢**Beginning to align support systems and processes with the team structure.** Compensation, appraisal, classification and reward systems often need to be adjusted to support both team and individual performance. It is helpful to include other resources early in discussions on grade structures, roles, compensation and evaluation for teams. (e.g., Human Resource Group personnel, representatives from program areas where teams have been implemented, union representatives, etc.) (For additional information see: "Personnel Issues," page 66.)

Issues for the Sponsor to Consider:

➢**Roles in the new structure.**
Ambiguity associated with the transformation to teams can be avoided by the sponsor's ability to clarify critical issues early. For example:

◆ ***Who*** does ***what***?

◆ ***When*** do they start?

Sponsor

- What are the responsibilities of the sponsor?

Team Leader

- What is the role of the team leader?
- Will it be a supervisory or non-supervisory position?
- Will the role be stable or rotated?
- What impact will the duties assigned have on position classification and bargaining unit status?

(For more information see: "Personnel Issues," page 66.)

Team Members

- What are the expectations for team members?

High performance teamwork requires interdependence, so it's critical that expectations are clear at all levels.

(For additional information see: "Defining Roles and Responsibilities," page 48, "Clarifying Team Boundaries," page 49.)

➢**Team boundaries and limits of authority.** Teams tend to develop to progressively higher levels of decision making and authority. Initially, the teams will require a greater level of direction and involvement from the sponsor. As the team matures, the sponsor's role shifts from identifying tasks and influencing decisions to delegating authority and providing coaching and support when difficulties arise. When preparing for teams, the sponsor needs to clearly outline when and how this transfer will occur.

Key questions for the sponsor to consider:

- ☑ To what extent will the team be empowered to set their own goals, objectives and plans? At what point do they need to seek approval? What is their limit of authority?
- ☑ To what degree will the team set their own work schedules and assignments? With whom will they need to coordinate their efforts?
- ☑ What is the extent of the team's authority on budget and funding issues?
- ☑ What is the team's role in interviewing and selecting new members and team leaders?
- ☑ To what extent will the team evaluate their progress and implement changes and solutions?
- ☑ What is the team's level of responsibility for evaluating performance of team members?

➢**Team member selection.** Teams have different needs and members will need to be selected based on their ability to contribute to the team's mission, goals and objectives. Consider the following:

- **Who decides?** Whenever possible, provide employees with the opportunity to have a voice in their team membership. Involvement in decisions helps to strengthen commitment. If you are transforming pre-existing work groups into teams, extra effort will be needed to insure that team members understand why they are moving to teams, and that facilitation and support is available along the way.

- **Analyze the work necessary to achieve the mission.** High-performing teams require complementary skills and competencies to accomplish the mission. Analyze whether the team's work will require team members to be generalists as well as specialists. Identify the core competencies that are essential for the team to get started. While some technical expertise can be developed over time, it's critical that the team's core competencies exist at the beginning.

> ☞ *"By bringing together expertise of members, the team has been able to serve its customers better by providing technical assistance, resources, and leadership."*
>
> Gisela Harkin, OVAE

- **Identify individuals with strong interpersonal and team process skills.** Most individuals are willing and capable of developing the problem solving, decision making, conflict management and other team skills necessary for success. Seek opportunities to select, hire and reward employees that are team players.

> It has been estimated that 80 percent of employees are strong candidates for teams, 10 percent are marginal, and 10 percent (for a variety of reasons) are unsuitable.

- **Determine team size.** Experience indicates that the most effective work teams tend to be small (6 to 10 members). Large numbers create challenges in developing cohesiveness, commitment and mutual accountability. If you are transforming a larger work group, consider breaking it up into sub-teams.

- **Value diversity.** Teams will be most effective when team members bring a variety of perspectives, experiences and behavioral styles to the team. Diversity will increase the team's ability to identify creative and unique solutions to complex problems.

> ☛ *"From a personal view, the team concept affords me the opportunity to constantly learn and grow as well as expeditiously process my cases. The team will discuss the approach to investigating the allegations based on expertise within the team and weekly feedback is shared on the cases. This type of interaction allows one to grow and stay informed whether you are the primary investigator or not. I feel this type of sharing expedites the processing of a case so that no individual holds a case longer than necessary. The sharing is especially advantageous when an investigator has familiarity with the District and officials and can facilitate expeditious process for the person assigned to the case."*
>
> Sandy Purkett, OCR

- **Identify how team leaders will be selected.** What role will the team leader play? Will teams choose their own leaders? Will former supervisors become team leaders? Will the selection of a former supervisor adversely affect the transfer of decision making authority? The tendency to rely on the traditional chain of command can be a hard habit to break. It is recommended that the sponsor consult with Human Resources and/or Labor Relations as appropriate before assigning supervisory responsibilities to team leaders.

➢Team training and support.
A key role of the team sponsor is to support training for teams when needed. Ensure that team members have access to training to improve their problem solving, meeting management, communication and conflict management skills. Also, encourage leadership development to help managers and supervisors coach and guide more and learn how to command and control less. (For more information see: "Skills Needed to Make Teams Work," page 50.)

> A new team may spend up to 50 percent of their time on team building and team training issues. This decreases as the team develops.

➢Plan for a team kick-off.
Once the preliminary work has been completed, a kick-off meeting should be planned. This meeting will demonstrate a commitment to the team effort, signal to the group that things are changing and create a firm start date for the new team. Consider the following guidelines for the kick-off:

- Re-emphasize the compelling need to change.
- Present the vision, mission and critical outcomes.
- Hand off the responsibility to the team to develop individual team plans. (For more information see: "Team Planning," page 42.)
- Symbolically show the ending of an old way of doing business.

The kick-off should be upbeat, informative, organized and short. This meeting sets the tone for a successful transition to a new way of doing business.

Forming an *Ad Hoc* Team

Often called project or problem solving teams, ***ad hoc*** teams are most often created to address a particular customer or organizational problem. They can also be cross-functional; made up of people from different work areas who join together to accomplish a goal.

> ***Ad Hoc* Team:**
>
> *Ad hoc* teams are temporary, with members devoting full or only a portion of their overall work time to the team.

The benefits of the *ad hoc* team approach include:

- greater ability to solve complex problems
- increased innovation and creativity
- improved customer focus
- enhanced organizational communication

Issues for the sponsor to consider:

Although the creation of an *ad hoc* team is not a major organizational change, it does require effective planning and communication by the sponsor. Prior to the implementation of the team, the sponsor should begin to clarify the following:

- Purpose and critical outcomes for the team
- Roles: sponsor, team leader, team member
- Membership selection process
- Boundaries and limits of authority
- Plans for the team kick-off

(For additional information see: "Transforming Work Units into Teams," page 23.)

Special considerations for an *ad hoc* team:

➢**Time limits and expectations.** Participating on an *ad hoc* team is a temporary assignment for members. Plan to help team members answer:

- How much time will be devoted to the team?
- How will they balance their day-to-day responsibilities with team work?
- How will the team know when it's done?
- Will the team's recommendations be considered as recommended options or final decisions?

➢**Leading without authority.** Often there is not a formal reporting relationship between the sponsor and *ad hoc* team members. This requires sponsors to lead without authority. Consider:

- How will the team's performance be evaluated and rewarded?
- Will feedback on individual performance be shared with members' supervisors?

Note: The sponsor should be familiar with agency performance appraisal and recognition policies.

(For more information see: "Personnel Issues," page 66.)

➢**Maintaining Communication.** The sponsor should maintain a strong relationship with the team without interfering in the team's process. Since *ad hoc* team members are often from different locations, this requires careful planning. Establish communication channels to insure that the sponsor is able to:

- Measure progress
- Remove barriers
- Identify potential problems
- Secure necessary resources
- Celebrate successes

➢**Team Process Skills.** *Ad hoc* team members may have little team experience and may not have the opportunity to participate in skills development training as a team. Consider how the team will develop the necessary skills to accomplish its goal. Does the team leader or another member have strong facilitation skills? Will other resources, such as a non-member facilitator, need to be made available to the team?

How Employees Can Prepare for Teams

Being part of a team can offer individuals the opportunity to develop new skills, broaden their scope of work, enhance their creativity, increase their visibility and strengthen their sense of involvement and contribution to the organization. It can also be challenging, and at times frustrating, to tackle complex issues collectively. There are a number of things individuals can do to prepare to become a team member:

➢**Learn**. Find out as much as you can about why the team is being created and the forces driving the change. If you understand the team's purpose you will be better able to help your team get focused quickly.

➢**Assess**. Working as part of a team requires different skills than individual work. Assess which interpersonal and process skills you already have and which you will need to develop. For example: Are you comfortable expressing your ideas in a group? Are you a good listener? Can you disagree with someone constructively and without attacking him or her? Do you know what it takes to run an effective meeting? There are many books, videos and seminars available that can help you strengthen your skills. (For more information: See "Recommended Reading, References and Resources," page 60.)

☞ *"This has definitely been an opportunity to develop new skills – skills I think are pretty valuable and marketable."*

"I've actually found that it is less stressful to be part of a team. We all kind of support each other and pitch in to help anyone who is overloaded."

"I really feel good about what our team accomplished. Others said it couldn't be done and we proved it could."

"Maybe teams are not for everyone but I definitely think being on a team is a more interesting, exciting way to work."

Comments from *Team Handbook* survey and interviews.

➢**Be flexible.** In today's demanding and often chaotic world, the ability to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty is an increasingly important skill. When an entire organization or area shifts to teams, it requires that expectations, roles, priorities and relationships all be redefined. Recognize the stress that this type of change may initially produce. Determine what you need to do to keep a positive focus in an often confusing time.

Recommended Reading, References and Resources

RECOMMENDED READING:

Soundview Executive Book Summaries are an excellent resource for busy people. Soundview offers summaries of the thirty top business books each year. The summaries are usually no longer than eight pages and make it possible to explore a full range of business ideas, management theories and self development tips and techniques. We have found the following three books summarized by Soundview very helpful on leading change:

→The Price Waterhouse *Change Integration Team's: Better Change: Best Practices for Transforming Your Organization.* Soundview Executive Book Summaries Order #17-3
→Douglas K. Smith's: *Taking Care of Change: New Principles for Managing People and Performance,* Soundview Executive Book Summaries Order # 18-11.
→John P. Kotter's: *Leading Change: An Eight-Step Action Plan for Leaders,* Soundview Executive Book Summaries Order # 18-25.

Be sure to check out Soundview's World Wide Web Site: http://www.summary.com.

Sponsors, managers, and organizational design teams may benefit from Susan Mohrman's, Susan Cohen's and Allan Mohrman's *Designing Team-Based Organizations.* (AMACOM). This book tackles the problem of designing the parent organization to support team work.

PEER COACHING:

Principal Offices and divisions transforming to teams include:

OBEMLA	OCR	OESE
OSERS	OIG	OPE/DCS
OM	OVAE/DVTE	

INDIVIDUAL INTERNAL RESOURCES:

For additional information feel free to contact the following individual(s) who are available to share their teaming experiences:

Gisela Harkin, OVAE
Stella Klugman, OCR
Sandy Purkett, OCR

Implementing Teams

- Building High-Performing Teams
- Stages of Team Development
- Team Planning
- Skills Needed to Make Teams Work
- Team Leadership

Building High-Performing Teams

Building high-performing teams is an extensive, ongoing effort. In reality a team is never built; it is continuously improving.

The seven questions in the sidebar may not all be answered when the team is initially formed. However, the earlier the team can address these issues, the faster the team will begin to produce results.

Seven Important Questions for Teams To Answer

- ◆What is the purpose of our team?
- ◆How should we structure ourselves?
- ◆Who will be our leader and how is he/she chosen?
- ◆Who has a stake in our success?
- ◆What methods will be used to solve problems?
- ◆How will we interact with other groups and teams?
- ◆What benefits do team members desire from the team?

Characteristics of High-Performing Teams:

- Principled leadership
- Results oriented structure
- Committed to a common purpose
- Specific long and short term goals and plans
- Well-defined boundaries
- Active participation
- Clear roles
- Accountability at both the individual and team level
- Mutual trust and respect
- Open and honest communication among all members
- High synergy
- Shared responsibility
- Frequent recognition

Stages of Team Development

Teams typically evolve through five distinct stages. To reach high performance, teams must move through all of the stages. However, the duration will vary from team to team. It is the responsibility of the team leader or a skilled facilitator to ease the transitions. The stages can be defined as follows:

Stages of Development

- ◆Forming
- ◆Storming
- ◆Norming
- ◆Performing
- ◆Adjourning

➢**Forming**- This is the initial stage of a new team. Team members are usually fairly congenial during this stage. Each team member is learning what his/her role will be on the team and discerning what rules and boundaries will govern the team. This can be described as the "getting to know you" stage. The team has successfully moved through this stage when team members begin to think of themselves as a TEAM.

☞ *"Our team went through quite a bit of 'storming.' The three-day planning meeting was a turning point for us. The combination of the well established goals and the newly developed team unity enabled us to complete a very difficult task and ultimately enabled us to achieve our goals. At that point we were together as a team because we choose to be, not because we were told to be!"*

Terri Liles, OPE

➢**Storming**- In this stage interpersonal conflict begins to emerge. Teams members accept the existence of the team, but may resist the boundaries imposed. Conflict tends to emerge over who will control the group and who does what? It is important to understand that conflict is a natural part of group development. When managed properly, conflict will make the team stronger and add to the team's ability to innovate. The team has moved through this stage when it has worked out its long and short term goals, reached clarity on boundaries, roles and responsibilities (including team leadership) and has begun to respect each other's strengths and weaknesses.

➢**Norming**- Eventually, healthy teams learn to manage conflict and emerge to the norming stage. In this stage the team has a clear understanding of what defines appropriate team behavior. It is important for teams to establish ground rules for working together. The team has moved through this stage when they have established a common set of ground rules and developed a sense of cohesiveness.

Sample ground rules:

- We respect each other's opinions.
- We ensure that meetings are productive.

➢**Performing**- This is the most productive developmental stage, the one in which teams begin to achieve their goals and measurable results. The action plan is in motion and the team is progressing toward their mission/vision. This is usually a gratifying phase for team members because they begin to realize positive results from all of their efforts. This is the highest level of functioning for a team. However, a major change may cause the team to "slip back" and work through storming or norming once again.

➢**Adjourning**- The final stage for *ad hoc* teams deals with closure. Team members determine what needs to be done to wrap up the team's activities and tasks. Reactions to this stage will vary from team member to team member. Some will celebrate and enjoy the team's accomplishments while others will feel a sense of loss. The team has successfully moved through this stage when it has evaluated and recognized its accomplishments, documented lessons learned and taken the necessary actions to insure that their recommendations and/or changes will be incorporated into the organization.

Team Planning

High-performing teams put a tremendous value on identifying, both individually and collectively, with what they are doing. Engaging team members in the planning process builds commitment, broadens their experience towards team goals and objectives and provides a foundation for developing teamwork.
A team plan can help facilitate a successful transition to a team-based structure. Below is an outline of the suggested components:

➢**Shared Vision and Mission.** Team members will work hardest for a purpose they help create. Believing in one's work and its purpose is one of the most powerful motivators available to team members. Teams should work together to clarify a vision and mission that all can commit to.

How to develop a team vision statement. A vision statement is a written image of the team in its ideal, envisioned state. Spend time answering the following:

- Why do we exist?
- What do we want to become in the future?
- What represents success?

A compelling vision:

"Moving from red tape to results to create a government that works better and costs less."

Vice President Al Gore
National Performance Review

How to develop a team mission statement. The team's mission statement summarizes the team's reason for being. It is used to describe what the team is to do, who the team does it for and why the work is being done.
Mission statements work best when they are customer-driven, simple, concise and easy to remember.

☞ **Sample mission statement:**

"The Goals 2000 Teacher Forum invites teachers to become partners in change through listening, reflecting, and acting."

Goals 2000 Teacher Forum

A team mission worksheet is as follows:

TEAM MISSION WORKSHEET

WHAT? Product/Service	WHO? Customer	WHY? A description of why the products and services are needed.

➢**Goal Setting.** Successful teams transform their common purpose into specific, measurable and realistic performance goals and objectives. Involving all members in the goal-setting process will increase commitment and cooperation. There are four key criteria for setting effective objectives:

- **Measurable**- A measurable objective can be evaluated quantitatively at the conclusion of the effort.
- **Attainable**- If an objective is unrealistic or impossible it will de-motivate team members.
- **Challenging**- If an objective is not challenging enough, team members will not perform to their fullest capacity.
- **Specific Time Frame**- This aspect of the objective tells the team when they are expected to achieve the desired results.

➢**Goal Setting (Continued)**
Strong objectives take significant time and thought to develop. The pay-back, however, is immense. Research has consistently demonstrated that when clear objectives are set and measured, team members improve their performance and the team's overall productivity increases.

An example of an effective objective:

We will institute a drug prevention education campaign which will decrease the number of drug-related disciplinary actions in the public schools in our region by 10 percent over the next academic year.

➢**Action Planning**. Once the team has defined its goals and objectives it is important to clearly define the approach or action plan they will take to coordinate work activities. The action plan will serve as the road map to achieve the team's goals and objectives.

Checklist for preparing action plans:

- ☑ Prepare action plans in sub-teams. Never try to write documents from scratch in a large group.
- ☑ Use the entire team for brainstorming, feedback, input, changes and editing.
- ☑ Keep plans simple.
- ☑ List each objective on a separate action plan.
- ☑ Assign task responsibility and deadlines.

TEAM ACTION PLAN

Goal/Objective # ____ of _____:

Objective: _____

#	TASK DESCRIPTION	TEAM MEMBER	DATE DUE	RESOURCES NEEDED
1				
2				
3				

Teams with complex missions will have several pages to their action plan, each containing a different objective. Other teams may only have one or two sheets.

➢**Creating Team Values.** Strong values ensure a positive, productive and ethical working environment for the team. Values are generally slow to change and strongly held. Team values define the character the team strives to possess.

It is essential that the values for the team be defined by the entire team.

☞ *Our policies, processes and products are customer-focused and quality driven. We value:*

- ☑ Empowerment though clear and open communication.
- ☑ Fairness, consistency and integrity in all aspects of our work.
- ☑ Responsiveness to customer needs and objectives.
- ☑ Professionalism and effectiveness.
- ☑ Flexibility and innovation.

Human Resources Group, OM

Checklist for developing team values:

- ☑ Schedule a team meeting devoted to value clarification
- ☑ Prior to the meeting, ask each team member to define his or her top 3-5 values.

(A list of the ASPA's code of ethics is available in the sidebar as a thought starter.)

- ☑ Review each team member's top 3-5 values.
- ☑ Discuss recurring themes and patterns.
- ☑ Consolidate a list of team values.
- ☑ Gain consensus on the team's values and post in the team plan.

☞ *"What made a difference is that we agreed at the beginning that we wanted to be the best at EVERYTHING, and would do what ever it took to accomplish it!"*

Mary Ann Johnson, OPE

American Society for Public Administration's code of ethics:

Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity in all public activities in order to inspire public confidence

Serve the public with respect, concern, courtesy and responsiveness

Strive for personal and professional excellence

Approach duties and activities with a positive attitude and support open communication, creativity, dedication and compassion

Serve in such a way as not to realize undue personal gain

Avoid conflicts of interest

Respect and protect privileged information

Exercise appropriate discretionary authority

Keep up-to-date on emerging duties

Support and promote merit employment and affirmative action to assure equal employment

Eliminate fraud, discrimination and mismanagement of public funds

➢**Creating Team Ground Rules.** Team ground rules define the appropriate team behavior and guide the actions of each team member. It is important for the team to develop a set of guidelines for working together. These guiding principles will be particularly helpful during team meetings. (For more information see: Process Skills, page 53.)

Checklist for developing ground rules:

- ☑ Schedule a team meeting devoted to defining the team's ground rules.
- ☑ Solicit input from each team member using the round-robin method.
- ☑ Discuss recurring themes or patterns.
- ☑ Consolidate a list of ground rules.
- ☑ Discuss the types of behaviors that would support or hinder the team's ground rules.
- ☑ Discuss ways to guard the team's ground rules. (For example, in a team meeting a process observer could be responsible for highlighting any behaviors hindering the team's performance.)
- ☑ Include the agreed upon ground rules in the team plan and post at all team meetings.

☞ *"Through the establishment of ground rules, operating procedures, and roles for various team members, our team was able to lay a strong foundation for successfully accomplishing the task of turning team goals into departmental realities."*

Robert Theobald, OCFO

Sample Ground Rules:

◆We will resolve team problems within the team.

◆We will not conduct side conversations.

◆We will attend meetings and show up on time.

◆We will leave our other work behind.

◆We will be mindful of sharing team discussion with outside parties.

ICART, OCFO

➢**Defining team roles and responsibilities**. High-performing teams hold themselves accountable at both the individual and team level. Team members count on each other to complete assigned tasks at a predetermined level of quality and within the time frame agreed upon. One of the best ways to ensure a smooth functioning team is to clearly define roles and responsibilities.

> ☞ *"The RCC Chartered Awards and Incentives Team led, in my opinion, a good case study in effective teaming. It was a leaderless group with various members stepping into and out of "lead" roles depending on the particular stage of the project and the presence or absence of other members. Workload and responsibilities were balanced among members with some picking up slack from others when necessary depending on conflicts with permanent assignments back at the office. Consensus never became a problem; disagreements were short-term and amicably resolved."*
>
> *Tom Lambiase, OM*

Key questions teams need to answer:

- ☑ What is the role of the team leader?
- ☑ How do team members contribute (individually and collectively) to the team's mission, goals and objective?
- ☑ How will team members represent their own area of expertise yet be accountable for team performance?
- ☑ To what extent are team members interdependent?
- ☑ How will the team follow up on assigned tasks? Action plans?
- ☑ How will the team measure its quality and performance?

(For more information see: "Team Roles," page 19 and "Team Leadership," page 59.)

Assigning team meeting roles and responsibilities:

- ☑ How often will team members need to meet?
- ☑ What roles will be rotated during team meetings?
- ☑ How often will these roles change?

Team meeting roles:
- ◆Leader/Facilitator
- ◆Scribe
- ◆Timekeeper
- ◆Process observer

(For more information on team meeting roles: see "Process Skills," page 53.)

➢**Clarifying Team Boundaries.** Effective teams are clear about their level of empowerment and decision making. Teams usually find themselves on a continuum as they increase their level of decision making authority.

Key questions teams need to answer:

Self-directed

Semi-autonomous

Leader-centered

- ☑ To what extent can we set our own goals, objectives and plans? Whose approval do we need and what is our limit of authority?
- ☑ To what degree can we set our own work schedules and assignments? With whom do we coordinate our efforts?
- ☑ What is the extent of our authority on budget and funding issues?
- ☑ What is the team's role in interviewing and selecting new members and team leaders?
- ☑ To what extent do we evaluate our own progress and implement changes and solutions?
- ☑ What is our level of responsibility for evaluating performance of team members?

Skills Needed To Make Teams Work

New team members need to sharpen skills and competencies in two key areas:

Interpersonal skills

- working well with others
- listening actively
- communicating openly and honestly
- giving feedback supportively

Process skills

- running effective meetings
- identifying and solving problems
- generating and summarizing ideas
- gaining consensus

Interpersonal skills help team members develop healthy relationships and communications with others. Components of strong interpersonal skills include:

- **Working well with others**—In order to function well as a team, it's helpful to recognize and appreciate the behavioral strengths and differences each team member brings to the team. Successful teams capitalize on team members' strengths and compensate for the weaknesses. This understanding can be developed through tools that help team members identify and adapt to various behavioral styles.

Useful tools might include:

◆DISC Behavioral Assessment
◆Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
◆The Johari Window

(For more information see: "Recommended Reading, References and Resources," page 60.)

☞ *"As a team, we were able to complete a complex, seemingly overwhelming, assignment. In a team effort, the assignment was broken into manageable components. The components were assigned and completed by each team member. The strengths and weaknesses of the team members made the difference in the final product. One team member's strength replaced another team member's weakness. Team brainstorming revealed ideas which were expanded and/or implemented by the team members."*
National Hearings Training Team, OPE

- **Listening actively-** Teams need team players who are willing to listen actively to the needs and concerns of their teammates. Active listening skills help the team to overcome breakdowns in communication.

  Team members can improve their listening skills by

  - ☑ paraphrasing- repeating, in your own words, what someone has said.
  - ☑ reflecting- paraphrasing but adding your interpretation of the person's feelings.
  - ☑ mirroring- repeating back the exact words that someone has said to you.
  - ☑ questioning- probing and asking for additional information and clarification.

  Active listening is a non-judgmental response, so it helps to minimize conflicts.

> ☞ *"Succeeding as a team meant an understanding that no one's job was less important than his/her counterpart. We expressed a serious concern that everyone have an equal opportunity to express their ideas and concerns. You become very effective listeners and communicators."*
>
> Pat Dickerson,
> OPE

- **Communicating openly and honestly-** High performing teams distinguish themselves by mutual trust and respect among members. Trust is carefully built by team members who are willing to communicate open and honestly and share ideas and information freely.

Tips for improving communication:

- ☑ Reinforce information sharing through frequent team meetings.
- ☑ Develop facilitation skills that improve the team's ability to generate ideas and opinions freely.
- ☑ Respect differences in communication style and adapt accordingly. (e.g., Some people need to "hear" the big picture behind decisions and actions rather than the detail.)

➢ **Giving feedback** – The ability to give useful feedback is an essential skill for teamwork. Feedback helps team members understand the impact of their behavior on the team. It allows both individual members and entire teams to correct undesirable actions. Provide useful feedback by:

- ☑ Using "I" statements to describe specific behavior and its effect. (See example.)
- ☑ Being clear about the desired behavior.
- ☑ Showing respect for the other person.
- ☑ Listening to the other person's point of view.

Example:
"I'm concerned that you haven't spoken much during the last few meetings. When you're so quiet it makes me unsure about what you're thinking. I know you have ideas the team would benefit from. I hope you'll share them more with us."

Assigning a process observer to provide feedback during team meetings can help insure that every meeting is a learning session. (For more information see: "Process Skills," page 53.)

Process Skills

Process skills help teams move from task-to-task and objective-to-objective. They are the skills that allow teams to make decisions, solve problems and conduct effective meetings. The key is to learn a variety of process management techniques that can be customized to fit the unique situation or needs of the team.

Suggested process management tools:

- Team meeting procedures
- Problem solving model
- Criteria for seeking consensus

➢**Team Meeting Procedures.** Good team meeting procedures make for productive meetings. Some teams develop their meeting procedures at the beginning of every team meeting, while others use an established set of ground rules.

Tips for keeping meetings on track:

- **Prepare and distribute a meeting agenda in advance**. State the time and location, attendance required, the purpose of the meeting and proposed agenda items.

- **Select team meeting roles.** Assign roles at the beginning of each team meeting. Rotate roles to help broaden the team member's experience in running effective meetings.

Common team meeting roles include:

Scribe:

☑ Records decision and action items for the team
☑ Provides a copy for each team member

Time Keeper:

☑ Supports the team in setting time parameters for each agenda item
☑ Keeps the team aware of the time schedule

Leader (may also be called a facilitator):

- ☑ Schedules and conducts meetings
- ☑ Keeps the team focused on the agenda
- ☑ Helps the team decide on the process tools to be used
- ☑ Encourages participation
- ☑ Tests for consensus at major decision points

Team process tools for generating ideas include:

- ♦ Round-robin
- ♦ Brainstorming
- ♦ Nominal Group Technique

(See "Problem Solving Techniques," page 55.)

Process Observer:

- ☑ Guards the team's ground rules
- ☑ Observes both the process and the content of meeting discussions
- ☑ Provides feedback to members regarding actions during meetings

- **Create an action plan.** Discuss the results of the meeting and assign action items and timeline.

- **Wrap up.** Review the effectiveness of the team meeting by discussing: positives, areas for improvement, accomplishments.

➢**Problem-solving techniques.**
As teams progress toward their vision they will encounter problems. The problems can relate to the technical work of the team or the team processes. Either way, it is useful for teams to develop a logical, systematic process for dealing with problems. There are many tools and techniques available to assist teams in problem-solving.

Problem-Solving Model

Step 1: Identify & Select the Problem

Step 2: Analyze the Problem

Step 3: Generate Potential Solutions

Step 4: Select the Best Possible Solution

Step 5: Implement and Evaluate the Solution

Below is a list of five key steps in the problem-solving process:

Step 1: Identify & Select the Problem - Many times issues identified as problems are actually symptoms. The easiest way for a team to accurately identify problems is to list the symptoms on a flip chart, then brainstorm possible causes of the problem.

For example:

A team might identify poor attendance at meetings as a problem. However, further research indicates that the true problem is a lack of communication. Team members are not being informed in a timely manner of meetings and are therefore unable to attend. The poor attendance at meetings is not a problem, but actually a symptom of the communication problem.

Step 2: Analyze the Problem - Problem solving success relies on what data is available and how it's used. When teams are attempting to analyze a particular problem, it is useful to brainstorm what data and other resources are available to help solve the problem.

Two key questions regarding the data should be considered:

- What does the team already know?
- What does the team need to find out?

Team process tools for analyzing ideas include:

◆Process Flowcharting
◆Pareto Charts
◆Cause and Effect Diagrams

(For more information: See "Recommended Reading, References and Resources," page 60.)

These key questions will guide the data selection and use. Remember to continually review the problem during this stage.

Step 3. Generate Potential Solutions - This stage of the problem solving process answers the question, "how can we make the necessary changes to resolve our dilemma?" The goal of this stage is for the team to generate as many potential solutions as possible. This can be done through round-robin, brainstorming or using the nominal group technique.

☞ *"Teams are the future. By working as a team within the Case Management concept, we were able to get the "big picture" and make a more accurate assessment of all the issues pertaining to an institution. Any actions necessary were the result of a team consensus based on detailed research and data."*

Pat Dickerson, OFE

A brief review of the techniques are as follows:

The **round-robin method** is a pattern for soliciting feedback from team members. The leader/facilitator asks each member to share his/her opinion on an issue. The objective is to solicit ideas without discussion or judgment, and then generate a consolidated list of the most relevant issues.

Brainstorming involves the free flow of ideas in a group. As ideas are stated, they are captured on a flip chart. All judgments are withheld until the end of the brainstorming process.

The **nominal group technique** is a method of weighted voting that starts with silent idea generation. Each team member captures his/her own solutions on paper or on a computer screen. After members have exhausted their individual ideas, the leader/facilitator asks each team member to read one idea at a time. At the end of this session all ideas are evaluated and prioritized by the team members. The nominal group technique ensures full participation by all team members.

Step 4. Select the Best Possible Solution - The group must determine which solutions are the best for the stated problem. Once again, it is important to review the problem. The group can use a consensus approach to determine the best possible solution.

Step 5. Implement and Evaluate the Solution - The solution should be implemented using a systematic plan. An action plan should be generated and monitored to evaluate results.

➢**Gaining Consensus.** Consensus is a critical form of team decision making. It is one of many methods that teams use to come to agreement. Although it takes time, consensus decisions are generally stronger than those made by other methods. For important decisions, it builds commitment and eliminates the winners and losers that voting can produce.

Consensus has been achieved when each member believes:

◆He/she has been heard and understood by the rest of the team.

◆The solution or decision is something he or she can live with.

◆He/she is willing to invest energy to carry out the necessary actions.

Tips for achieving consensus:

- ☑ Encourage all members to express their opinions and thoughts
- ☑ Emphasize areas of agreement
- ☑ Explore differences and disagreement
- ☑ Develop new ideas or variations of the original idea
- ☑ Repeatedly test for consensus
- ☑ Continue to find areas of agreement until consensus is achieved

Not all decisions need to be made by consensus. Use consensus when:

◆The decision is important to the team

◆There are a number of alternatives or facets of an issue to be explored

◆When the decision significantly affects all members of the team

Team Leadership

The team-leader role is an evolving one. Effective team leaders must be strong enough to provide focus and direction during the team's formation and flexible enough to transfer decision making authority as the team matures. While the role differs based on the type of team and the stage of development, certain common characteristics describe successful team leaders, including:

- Builds effective working relationships with peers, customers, stakeholders, etc.
- Practices effective communication skills including listening, observing, and collaborating
- Demonstrates enthusiasm, drive and energy to overcome obstacles
- Facilitates change, tolerates ambiguity
- Shares knowledge and power
- Focuses on performance (mission, goals, objectives, action plans)
- Builds trust and demonstrates honesty and integrity
- Contributes valued technical expertise to the team
- Motivates others
- Devotes appropriate time to team development

Team leaders should continuously assess their effectiveness in demonstrating the leadership, technical expertise, team process skills and interpersonal skills necessary for success. (For more information see: "Types of Teams," page 14, "Team Roles," page 19 and/or "Personnel Issues," page 66.)

Recommended Reading, References and Resources

RECOMMENDED READING:

A good book for implementing teams is Deborah Harrington-Mackin's, *The Team Building Tool Kit* (AMACOM Books, 1993). Using lists and question-and-answer formats, the book describes strategies for starting teams, running effective meetings and gaining the desired team behavior. The book also has a helpful overview of how to collect and analyze data using process flowcharting, pareto charts and cause and effect diagrams.

Statistically, three-quarters of the people you work with have a different work style than you. Robert Bolton and Dorothy Gover Bolton's book *Understanding People Styles at Work* (AMACOM Books, 1996) offers tips on how to develop effective working relationships by learning how to recognize and appreciate differences in behavioral styles.

REFERENCE MATERIALS: (ASSESSMENTS, TEAM ACTIVITIES, ETC.)

If you are interested in learning how to identify and adapt to various behavioral styles, a useful tool is the Managing for Success© Software product distributed by Impact Training Systems, Inc. Managing for Success© addresses behavior in four dimensions: how you approach problems and challenges, interact and influence people, deal with pace and consistency and deal with rules and regulations.

A widely used personality framework is the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). It is 100-question personality test designed to classify people into 16 different personality types (i.e. introvert versus extrovert, intuitive versus sensing, etc.)

The Johari Window is a popular assessment tool designed to categorize communication styles. The essence of this model is the belief that mutual understanding improves communication. The model classifies a person's tendency to help or hinder communication along two dimensions: exposure (the extent to which a person might openly divulge feelings and experiences) and feedback (the extent to which a person might seek feedback from others.)

INDIVIDUAL INTERNAL RESOURCES:

For additional information feel free to contact the following individuals who are available to share their teaming experiences:

Carolyn Toomer, Debra Ruffin, LaJoy Matlock, Myron McNeil, Bertha McMorris, OPE

Sustaining Teams

- Continuous Team Improvement
- Challenges for Established Teams
- Personnel Issues

Continuous Team Improvement

Continuous improvement efforts are critical to the long-term success of the team structure. Teams should periodically:

- Identify the team's current state and compare with desired state (vision)
- Identify gaps in team performance
- Identify barriers to high performance
- Utilize the team problem-solving process to develop solutions
- Set aside time to focus on team procedures and processes and identify opportunities for improvement

This process looks for improvements in both *what* the team does and *how* it does it. Teams may want to designate a team member to lead the continuous improvement effort. This person can stay current on the literature regarding quality and team functioning and serve as a liaison with other teams inside and outside the Department of Education.

Challenges for Established Teams

A focus on continuous improvement will help a developing team effectively handle many challenges including team-member turnover – adding and losing members, dealing with non-productive members and avoiding "groupthink."

➢**Adding a new team member**. New members can bring fresh energy, perspectives and knowledge to the team. The challenge is to help them become productive as quickly as possible. An orientation plan will assist both the newcomer and the team:

- Pair the new member with an experienced, knowledgeable team member to help determine what the new member needs to learn. Share background information on the team including mission, goals, plans and team ground rules. Determine what training (formal or informal) may be helpful.

- Set aside time (before a meeting, over lunch, etc.) for everyone to meet informally.

- Encourage the new member to ask questions during team meetings and as he/she gets started on the team's work. Value the new member's fresh perspective as an opportunity for greater creativity or a reality check. (For information on team hiring see "Personnel Issues," page 66.)

➢**Losing a team member.** The loss of a team member should be viewed as a learning opportunity. When possible conduct an exit interview to learn:

- Why is the team member leaving?
- Could it have been avoided? If so, how?
- What did the team member think the team did best? (processes, communication, planning, etc.)
- What needs to be improved?

➢**Losing a team member.**
In addition, the impact of the loss on the team will need to be addressed:

- What skills, knowledge or abilities will need to be replaced?
- Will the person be replaced by a new team member or will existing team members fill in the gap?
- How does the team feel about losing this member?

Finally, identify ways in which you can thank the departing member for his/her contributions to the team.

➢**Dealing with a non-productive member.** Teams that have developed strong ground rules will have fewer team behavior problems. But what happens when a team member does not live up to the ground rules or expectations of the team? If the behavior is ignored, it will erode the effectiveness of the team. Use a problem solving approach to address the issue:

Step 1: Identify and analyze the problem.
One person (possibly the team leader) should speak privately with the team member to try to understand his/her perspective. Is he aware of the problem? Does he understand the impact it has on the team? Is he aware that this is an important issue for the team? From his perspective, what are the causes? (For more information see: "Skills Needed to Make Teams Work," page 50.)

Step 2: Identify the best possible solution(s).
What help could the team provide? What changes are needed? What will everyone commit to?

Step 3: Implement and evaluate.
Provide positive feedback for improvement. If the problem persists, it may be necessary to involve the team sponsor or the individual's manager. (For more information see: "Personnel Issues," page 66.)

➢**Groupthink.** Too much agreement is just as dangerous to the team as too much conflict. When team members want to keep peace above all else, the team can fall into groupthink. Groupthink is characterized by behavior that

- closes the team off from other groups
- sets up an "us" versus "them" mentality
- encourages team members to go along with the crowd even when they don't agree

Groupthink can have serious consequences on the team's ability to make quality decisions. Signs of groupthink:

- "I'm not going to test for consensus because I think we're more or less in agreement here."
- "I had a few objections but since everyone else seemed O.K. with the idea I decided not to bother to bring them up."
- "If everyone else would just leave us alone, this team would be just fine."

To avoid groupthink:

- Use process skills that encourage all members to participate
- Generate pro's and con's for critical decisions
- Welcome perspectives and input from outside the team

Personnel Issues

The federal government has implemented teams in an effort to become more innovative and responsive. But what happens when such a radically different way of operating is introduced into what has traditionally been a hierarchical bureaucracy? The result can be confusion, if the new roles and traditional systems and policies don't mesh.

Many efforts are underway to reinvent government human resource systems to better meet the needs of teams. However, in the government, as in most organizations, changes in systems and policies often lag behind the introduction of work teams and other new initiatives. Particularly for members of permanent teams, there may be many questions:

- How will teams affect grades and pay?
- What role does a team have in staffing and recruitment?
- Who will appraise performance and how?
- How will team members be rewarded or disciplined?

☞ *"After we went into the team concept, people began to emerge from the box that their job title had created. When people had to begin to work together on a common problem and forget the titles they held, the people began to do what it took to solve the problem presented rather than looking to see if this duty was in their position description."*

Elaine Kirkwood, OCR

In this rapidly changing world, clear answers to all questions are not immediately available. One of the challenges is to learn how to operate successfully amid ambiguity. The following information is offered as guidance on five key personnel topics: positions and grades, staffing and recruitment, performance appraisal, recognition and discipline.

➢**Positions and grades: team members.** Since teams emphasize collaborative efforts and common goals, it is not surprising that questions arise about grade level distinctions among team positions. A number of factors are considered when determining grades for individuals and must be consistently applied in a team as well as a non-team structure.

GRADE LEVEL DISTINCTIONS

FACTORS	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
Knowledge required	• What kind of knowledge is needed? • How is the knowledge used?
Supervision received	• How specific are the instructions provided? • How is worked assigned? • How much latitude does the employee have to carry out the work? • What qualities are looked for in reviewing the employee's work?
Guidelines	• What guidelines are available? • What judgment is used in applying guidelines?
Complexity	• What is the nature of the assignment? • What is the level of difficulty in deciding what needs to be done? • How much originality is required?
Scope and effect	• What is the purpose of the work? • What is the impact of the work product or service?
Contacts	• With whom does the employee have contact? • What is the purpose of the contact?

Doing work differently (i.e., in a team setting) does not automatically convert to doing higher-grade work. Significant changes in the above factors should be evaluated to determine possible impact of team membership on the grade of employees.

➢**Positions and grades: team leaders.** The same criteria are applied when determining grades for team leaders, since at present team leadership is not a grade-controlling factor unless the leader is also a full supervisor. (See Supervisory Position Addendum found in the Appendix.) The responsibilities of team leaders can differ dramatically from team to team. However, the differences do not automatically translate into higher grades. In fact, a team may be led by an individual whose grade is lower than other team members. This most frequently occurs in *ad hoc* teams in which the team leader has technical expertise but is non-supervisory. The following chart illustrates a range of team leader roles and responsibilities:

TEAM LEADER ROLE	SUPERVISORY	INTERMEDIATE	FACILITATOR	TEAM LEADERSHIP ROTATED
RESPONSI-BILITIES	Team leader retains significant responsibility: assigns work, serves as rating official, approves training, etc., with team input.	Team leader retains some official responsibilities but most decisions made with team participation.	Team leader and team collaborate to determine work assignments and assure quality of performance. Facilitates team in identifying performance measures and training.	Team members are accountable for all responsibilities: work assignments, developing performance measures, evaluating performance, training, etc.
LEVEL OF TEAM EMPOWER-MENT	Leader-centered	Semi-autonomous	Self-directed	Self-directed

➢**Bargaining Unit Status.** It is important to recognize that team leadership has a potential impact on bargaining unit participation.

➢**Staffing.** As teams develop, they tend to assume greater responsibility for issues affecting the team, including staffing. A team that has worked hard to develop cohesiveness will want to have a role in the selection process of new team members:

- **Team hiring criteria.** Team members should work together to identify the criteria for evaluating candidates. Consider what technical, interpersonal and team process skills are needed by the team. Look for individuals who have demonstrated flexibility and willingness to learn new skills.

- **Team interviews.** Team interviews can be conducted to determine the potential of the candidates to fit as part of the team. During team interviews, all team members should be present and coordinate questions to explore specific hiring criteria. Prior to conducting interviews, ensure that all team members have the necessary interviewing skills and are aware of the legal guidelines for interview questions.

- **Team promotions.** Teams operating at a high level of empowerment may also participate in promotion decisions of team members.

It is important that teams involved in these staffing and recruitment activities address the issue of privacy protection to ensure that all decisions remain confidential.

➢**Performance appraisal.** A performance appraisal system is typically designed to accomplish a number of objectives:

- To improve communication
- To provide feedback on performance
- To motivate
- To correct work performance problems
- To encourage continual learning

There are number of ways in which teams and team members can be evaluated:

FOCUS ON THE INDIVIDUAL			FOCUS ON THE TEAM
Individual performance only	Individual performance as well as individual's contribution to the team	Team productivity as well as individual performance measures	Team productivity performance measures only

The Department's new multi-input GPAS provides for multiple performance appraisal input from a variety of sources which can include team members. It also contains an element on teamwork and cooperation.

- **Evaluating *Ad hoc* teams.** When appropriate, it is recommended that *ad hoc* team members receive evaluations based on their contributions to the team's success, as well as on their performance outside the team. The appraisals are most often conducted by their functional manager who receives feedback on team performance from the team members (peer evaluations), team leader and/or sponsor.

- **Evaluating permanent work teams.** Mature, permanent teams should be encouraged to develop their own team productivity measures and goals to be used to assess total team performance. Peer reviews tied to a formal appraisal system are generally more effective after the team has reached a more advanced stage of development. Considerable open communication and trust needs to exist so that any unfavorable feedback will be valued.

- **Performance measurements.** Both result and process measures can be considered when evaluating team member performance:

Result performance measures:	Process performance measures:
✓Achievement of team measures and goals	✓Willingness to contribute to the team
✓Responsiveness to customer needs based on customer feedback	✓Level of participation (including: collaboration and participative decision-making)
✓Quality of work	✓Interpersonal relationships

For more information on performance appraisals, refer to the "Personnel Management Instruction" (PMI), 430-2.

➢**Recognition.** To motivate and sustain teamwork, teams must be rewarded for their accomplishments.

- **Reward overall team accomplishments.** A true team award is earned through the unified efforts of all team members. It is recommended that a sponsor and team address the following:

  ✓What rewards (informal and formal) would be considered meaningful by the team?

  ✓Is money an appropriate reward? If so, how much constitutes an effective reward and how would it be distributed among members?

- **Reward individual team member accomplishments.** Individual team member rewards are usually best determined by the team. Consider how team members can participate in evaluating each other's contributions and in establishing meaningful and appropriate recognition.

Non-cash awards should also be considered including:

- Plaques, certificates, etc.
- Public displays of team accomplishments
- Publicity throughout the organization
- Team celebrations
- Additional resources for the team
- Visibility with senior management
- Time off

➢**Discipline.** In the early stages of a permanent team's development, disciplinary issues are often addressed by the supervisory team leader or sponsor. However, once the team has built a sense of trust and openness, it is ready to confront situations in which a team member's misconduct is negatively impacting the team and its mission. The team should have an agreed upon process for handling problems before involving management. Teams can use a conflict resolution process that keeps the discussions performance related, open and fair. A written summary of the discussion and any decisions reached can be signed and distributed to all involved when appropriate and consistent with privacy concerns. (For additional information see: "Problem-solving Techniques," page 55.)

If the behavior affects the organization beyond just the team, or if the team member isn't respecting the team's decision and repeats the process, it then becomes the responsibility of the sponsor or manager to address the issue. If the individual is part of an ad hoc team, the permanent supervisor would then be involved.

Recommended Reading, References and Resources

RECOMMENDED READING:

A good book for sustaining teams is Deborah Harrington-Mackin's, *Keeping the Team Going*. This book addresses teams as they move toward the later stages of the team development. Filled with practical tools for continuous team improvement, this book captures the issues impacting mature teams.

The US Department of Labor has produced an informative report entitled *Team Leadership in the New Workplace*. The report provides more detail on the impact of team leadership on classification, performance management and training and development.

REFERENCE MATERIALS: (ASSESSMENTS, TEAM ACTIVITIES, ETC.)

Mature teams may find Eileen Russo's *Team Accountability* assessment helpful. (Organization Design and Development, Inc., 1994). It is designed to help teams examine the issue of individual and team accountability.

INDIVIDUAL INTERNAL RESOURCES:

For additional information feel free to contact the following individuals who are available to share their teaming experiences:

Elaine Kirkwood, OCR
Tom Lambiase, OM

Epilogue

◆The Chicago DCS Hiring Branch Team processed over 4,000 requests for reviews well before their deadline and then volunteered to handle other groups' backlogs.

◆The EEO Quality Improvement Team effectively revised the EEO complaint system within the Agency.

◆OCRS's Team Renaissance Region VI increased the rate at which cases are processed and opened up lines of communication between regional offices and with headquarters.

◆The Institutional Claims Assessment and Receivable Team received the Deputy Secretary's Quality Reinvention Award for their "innovative quality management efforts and quality service in an exemplary manner".

◆The Goals 2000 Teacher Forum Planning Committee won the Hammer Award given to teams within the federal government who are making government more effective and efficient.

The list goes on...

Teams are making a difference at the Department of Education. When used appropriately, they can produce results that exceed those of traditional structures. By tapping the creative energy and ideas of all employees, teams and teamwork will play an increasing and vital role in helping the agency build a high performance work environment.

APPENDIX

Supervisory Position Addendum Referenced on page 68.

SUPERVISORY POSITION ADDENDUM

This addendum should be completed and attached to the position description for employees who spend **approximately 25 percent or more** of their time **supervising** other employees.

Organizational Location _____

Number of Subordinates: _____

Professional Other

Immediate Supervisor/Title _____

At a **MINIMUM**, the incumbent is responsible for accomplishing work through supervision of others, and technical competence related to the work supervised including:

- o Routinely assigning and reviewing work
- o Assuring production and accuracy requirements
- o Approving leave
- o Recommending performance standards and ratings

AND

- o Exercising **four or five** of the following (**CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**):

___ Plan work for staff, set and adjust short-term priorities, and prepare completion schedules.
___ Assign work based on capabilities of staff, and priorities.
___ Evaluate staff performance.
___ Advise staff on work and administrative matters.
___ Interview/recommend staff for appointment, promotion, or reassignment.
___ Hear and resolve routine staff complaints.
___ Effect minor disciplinary actions.
___ Develop and train staff.
___ Find ways to improve work quality and/or production.

Higher levels of responsibility are characterized by **AT LEAST EIGHT** of the following (**CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**):

___ Using staff to help direct or oversee work.
___ Significant responsibilities dealing with officials in other organizations.
___ Assuring performance rating equity among subordinate units.
___ Directing a program with significant resources (e.g., $1M+).
___ Making decision on work problems of subordinate supervisors or leaders.
___ Evaluating subordinate supervisors or leaders.
___ Selecting/approving selection of subordinate non-supervisors.
___ Recommending selection of subordinate supervisors or leaders.
___ Resolving group grievances and serious complaints.
___ Reviewing and approving serious disciplinary actions.
___ Deciding on unique, costly staff training.
___ Determining sufficiency of contractor-performed work.
___ Approving expenses such as within-grades/overtime/travel.
___ Recommending awards and bonuses.
___ Promote team building and program reengineering.

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